

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EUR-25 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 IO-12 AID-20 OMB-01 DPW-01 RSR-01 /141 W

----- 026190

P R 250242 Z APR 73 ZDK

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0682

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 7144

E. O. 11652: / A

TAGS: PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT: SITREP FOR APRIL 24, 1973

FOL TEL SENT ACTION SAIGON FROM CAN THO DTD APRIL 24, 1973,
RPTD TO YOU FOR YOUR INFO

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L CAN THO 0230

1. SUMMARY: MILITARY ACTIVITY IN MR IV REMAINS SPIRITED, WITH
THE NUMBER OF REPORTED INCIDENTS AND FRIENDLY AND ENEMY CASUALTIES
UP FROM YESTERDAY. THE PHNOM PENH CONVOY CROSSED INTO CAMBODIA
WITHOUT DAMAGE. THE AI TON TEAM WAS DETERRED BY MACHINE GUN
FIRE FROM INVESTIGATING AN ALLEGED INCIDENT. THE VC ATTACKED AND
SCATTERED A PSDF UNIT IN A DISTRICT PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED PACIFIED.
AN ARVN RANGER UNIT MAY HAVE CROSSED THE CAMBODIAN BORDER IN KIEN
TUONG PROVINCE. END SUMMARY.

2. SECURITY SITUATION: (A) ENEMY INITIATED INCIDENTS APRIL 23
TOTALLED FIFTY, UP FROM THE PREVIOUS DAY'S FORTY. THESE INCLUDED
FOUR GROUND ATTACKS, 35 ABF'S, NINE HARGEMBS, AND TWO TERRORIST
ATTACKS. MOST OF THE ACTION OCCURRED IN THE TRADITIONAL FOURSOME:
CHUONG TIEN, KIEN PHONG, CHAU DOC, AND DINH TUONG PROVINCES. THERE
WERE SIX ARVN SECURITY OPERATIONS: THREE AT THE REGIMENTAL LEVEL,
THREE AT SECTOR. LOSSES WERE CONSIDERABLY HIGHER THAN THE DAY
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BEFORE AND INCLUDED N RVNAF KIA, 107 WIA; 48 VC/NVA KILLED; TWO CIVILIANS KILLED AND EIGHT WOUNDED.

(B). THE MOST SERIOUS OF THE APRIL 23 TERRORIST ATTACKS OCCURRED IN MY THO. A PLASTIC CHARGE HEAVILY DAMAGED VIET MAI RESTAURANT, ON THE WATERFRONT NEAR THE ICCS QUARTERS, AT 1215. FIVE WERE KILLED AND ELEVEN WOUNDED, SEVERAL CRITICALLY. MOST OF THE VICTIMS WERE MILITARY OR POLICE.

(C) FOUR ROCKETS FELL NEAR THE HONG NGU HEADQUARTERS OF MGEN DI, COMMANDER OF THE ARVN 9 T DIVISION AS HIS FORCES CONTINUED THEIR DRIVE TO CLEAR THE MEKONG RIVER BANK AND NORTHERN HONG NGU DISTRICT.

UNDER DI'S SUPERVISION THE PHNOM PENH CONVOY LEFT APRIL 23 ON SCHEDULE AND CROSSED THE CAMBODIAN BORDER WITHOUT DAMAGE. THE OPERATION WAS SUPERBLY ORGANIZED WITH ARTILLERY, INFANTRY, NAVAL, AND AIR WORKING IN THE CLOSEST COOPERATION TO SUPPRESS NVA FIRE. THE VIETNAMESE NAVY FOUGHT HARDEST, SLUGGING ITS WAY THROUGH HEAVY AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE. ONE SAILOR WAS KILLED AND TWO WOUNDED.

3. ICCS: (A) THE CHIEF CANADIAN DELEGATE TO ICCS REGION VII REPORTS THAT ON APRIL 22 THE ICCS TRI TON TEAM DEPARTED FOR AN INVESTIGATION, BUT WERE DETERRED BY MACHINE GUN FIRE FROM SUSPECTED VC/NVA POSITIONS. THE FIRE CAME SO CLOSE THAT THE TRI TON TEAM BELIEVED IT WAS AIMED AT THEM. THE CANDEL REPORTED THAT HIS FELLOW

CANADIANS ARE UPSET OVER SEVERE RESTRICTIONS PLACED UPON ICCS HELICOPTER FLIGHTS AND REMARKED THAT WITHOUT THE QUICK REACTION CHOPPERS PROVIDE, THERE IS HARDLY ANY POINT IN INVESTIGATING INCIDENTS.

(B) MAJOR ROBERT STEWART, CHIEF OF THE CANADIAN ICCS DELEGATION IN VINH LONG, SAYS THAT THE POLES AND HUNGARIANS ARE TRYING TO ESTABLISH A JOINT OPINION ON IMPORTANT MATTERS BEFORE THEY ARE DISCUSSED IN A GENERAL MEETING. THESE ATTEMPTS AT COOPERATION AMONG THE COMMUNIST DELEGATES HAVE NOT TOTALLY FORECLOSED ARGUMENT AMONG THEMSELVES OVER THE FINAL REPORT. STEWART SAYS THE HUNGARIANS TEND TO CONTENTIOUSNESS, THE POLES TO COMPROMISE.

(C) POLISH JOKE: ONE OF THE NEW POLISH OFFICERS OF THE MOC HOA ICCS TEAM HAS TAKEN UP WITH A VIETNAMESE GIRL OF DUBIOUS REPUTATION, MUCH TO THE WAGGING OF LOCAL TONGUES. EARLIER, A US MILITARY OFFICER WAS REMOVED FROM THE JMC TEAM IN MOC HOA BECAUSE OF "FLAGRANT RELATIONS" WITH THE SAME GIRL. THE POLISH OFFICER WRESTED HER FAVORS AWAY FROM A PA&E MAN. AS A RESULT OF THE POLE'S AFFECTIONS, THE YOUNG LADY MAY SOON BECOME THE TARGET OF MOC OA
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BASED RANGERS.

4. COMMUNIST ACTIVITY: (A) THE VC ATTACKED A PSDF UNIT APRIL 16 IN TRA CU DISTRICT OF VINH BINH PROVINCE. THE DEPUTY HAMLET CHIEF AND VIS CADRE WERE KILLED, TWO PSDF WOUNDED, AND 23 MISSING. THE PROVINCE CHIEF REPORTEDLY REFUSES TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE INCIDENT

TOOK PLACE, POSSIBLY TO AVOID REPORTING A DECLINE IN SECURITY.
TRA CU DISTRICT HAD BEEN CONSIDERED PACIFIED BEFORE THE CEASEFIRE.
THE LARGE NUMBER MISSING SUGGESTS THE PSDF PANICKED OR PERHAPS
THAT THERE WERE VC AGENTS AMONF THE UNIT.

(B) A BAC LIEU BASED DEVELOPMENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS THAT AN
INFORMER WHO ATTENDED A VC MEETING IN GAI RAI DISTRICT REVEALED
THE FOLLOWING VC GOALS FOR APRIL, MAY, AND JUNE: RECRUIT AND
ORGANIZE THREE INFANTRY COMPANIES, ONE SAPPER PLATOON, AND ONE
ENGINEER PLATOON FOR THE DISTRICT. THESE UNITS, REINFORCED BY
A VC UNIT FROM CA MAU (PROBABLY THE 70- MAN U MINH 2 FORCE), WILL
SEEK TO " LIBERATE" MOST OF THE PF OUTPOSTS IN THE DISTRICT, AND
ATTACK OUTPOSTS AND DESTROY BOATS ON THE GANH HAO CANAL.

(C) FROM SEVERAL OTHER AREAS OF THE DELTA, WE HAVE RECEIVED RECENT
REPORTS THAT THE VIET CONG ARE TRYING TO SET UP NEW MAIN FORCE
UNITS OR RECRUIT MAIN FORCE FILLERS. THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASE
IN VC RECRUITING IN DUC TON DISTRICT, SA DEC PROVINCE. THE VC
ARE TRYING TO RECRUIT GUERRILLAS AND REORGANIZE THE DISTRICT
LOCAL FORCE, THE 206 TH OR 207 TH COMPANY, WHICH NOW HAS ONLY 20 MEN.

5. GVN ACTIVITIES: THE ARVN 7 TH DIVISION " AIR CAV" LAUNCHED
OPERATIONS AGAINST NVA FORCES IN TUYEN BINH DISTRICT, KIEN TUONG
PROVINCE. RELIABLE SOURCES REPORT RANGERS CROSSED THE BORDER
INTO CAMBODIA. IF TRUE, THIS IS THE FIRST KNOWN INCIDENT OF
RVNAF FORCES OPERATING ACROSS THE CAMBODIAN BORDER FROM KIEN
TUONG SINCE THE CEASEFIRE (CAN THO A-46). THE RANGER MOVEMENT
COULD NOT HAVE BEEN MUCH MORE THAN A SHORT PROBE.

BARNES UNQUOTE
BUNKER

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 APR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: kelleyw0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SAIGON07144
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730451/aaaaiwtk.tel
Line Count: 145
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kelleyw0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21-Aug-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <30-Oct-2001 by kelleyw0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 980202
Subject: SITREP FOR APRIL 24, 1973
TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT
To: EA
JEC PARIS
SECSTATE WASHDC
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005